

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/927,947

Examiner

Tadesse Hailu

Applicant(s)

DUARTE ET AL.

Art Unit

2173

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the AMENDMENT filed 2/13/07 and 5/2/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-6,9-19,22 and 24-27.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. This Office Action is in response to the AMENDMENT filed on February 13, 2007 and proposed amendments faxed on May 2, 2007.
2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.
3. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Matthew W. Hindman on May 2, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows: **in the claims**

Please CANCEL all the claims submitted on February 7, 2007 and REPLACE with the claims attached herein (*see facsimile pages 3-8*).

Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

4. Claims 1-6, 9-19, 22, and 24-27 are allowed.
5. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The Current claimed Invention:

The current invention discloses a system and method of displaying multiple, concurrent instant messaging (IM) Sessions. The system and method include providing multiple IM sessions, displaying a first one of the IM sessions in an IM session window. Representing each one of the IM sessions as a corresponding one of a number of indicators in the IM session window.

Representative claim 1:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of displaying a plurality of concurrent IM sessions:

providing a graphical interface to display information related to a plurality of IM sessions, wherein each IM session in the plurality of IM sessions is with a different session than the sessions of the other IM sessions in the plurality of IM sessions;

displaying a first one of the plurality of IM sessions in a single IM session window;
representing each one of the plurality of IM sessions as a corresponding one of a plurality of indicators in the single IM session window;

receiving a plurality of messages in one or more of the plurality of IM sessions;

indicating the number of messages received in one or more of the plurality of IM sessions in the respective indicators in the single IM session window which corresponds to the one or more of the plurality of IM sessions in response to receiving the plurality of messages, wherein indicating the number of messages comprises displaying a number of first symbols within each of the indicators corresponding to the number of messages; and

upon reaching a number of messages equal to a specified threshold, displaying a second symbol to indicate that the numbers of messages are above the threshold.

The PRIOR ART OF RECORDS:

Becker et al (US Pub No 2002/0130904):

Becker et al ("Becker") is also related to a method, apparatus and computer readable medium for multiple messaging session management with a graphical user interface. While Becker discloses receiving none, one or more messages in engaged and/or non-engaged sessions, but Becker fails to disclose if the number of message received exceeds a pre-defined threshold value to display a symbol in the session tab to indicate said received messages. As indicated in the previous Office action, Becker discloses most of the limitation of the method steps of claim 1

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except for the last two method steps (i.e., “indicating” method step and “upon reaching ... displaying a second symbol to indicate that the number of messages are above the threshold.” However, as described below Widger substantially teaches one of the missing steps, the “indicating” step.

Widger et al (US Pub No. 2005/0117733).

Similarly, Widger is also directed to a method for providing information to a user (or initiator) regarding availability of an intended recipient (or participant) for engaging in a communication session. Furthermore, Widger discloses not only the number of messages a recipient (recipient indicator) sent to a user but also the type of messages received, i.e., voice mail, fax mail and email. For example, as illustrated in Figs. 4 through 6, #404, the message notification portion includes voice mail, fax mail, and email icons, and wherein each depicting or numerically indicating the associated number of messages received (Widger, Par. 38). Thus, as given in the previous Office action, Becker in view of Widger renders the claimed “indicating” method step obvious. However, neither Becker nor Widger teaches the last step, i.e., “upon reaching ... displaying a second symbol to indicate that the number of messages are above the threshold.”

Cooper et al (US 6,701,330)

Cooper et al (US 6,701,330) relates to digital data processing systems, and more particularly, to such systems using messages in concurrent applications where a common database is being accessed by multiple hosts. Cooper further describes that each one of the number of counters further comprises an indicator, each one of a number of indicators corresponding to one of the number of user sessions, each one of said number of indicators

indicating that the concurrent application has received the input message from the corresponding one of the number of users and that the input message has not been processed by the concurrent application (see Abstract and claims 23 of Cooper). Cooper also fails to teach “upon reaching ... displaying a second symbol to indicate that the numbers of messages are above the threshold.”

Leeds (US 2002/0138588).

Another prior art closely related to the current invention is Leeds (US 2002/0138588). Leeds generally relates to a distributed computing environments, and more particularly to a server-client environment involving a system and method to provide adaptive forums communication on a client computer. Leeds, however fails to teach “upon reaching ... displaying a second symbol to indicate that the number of messages are above the threshold.” as recited above in claim 1.

Helfman et al (6,396,513)

Helfman discloses prioritizing and ranking of the mailboxes (session identifier), such as first (highest), second, and third (lowest). FIG. 5 illustrates six mailboxes, on the left side, and their assigned priorities, indicated by numbers (column 3, lines 56-65). Furthermore, while Helfman et al (6,396,513) discloses that the user may choose to be informed when the total number of unread messages exceeds a threshold, but Helfman does not disclose displaying in an indicator box or a symbol associated with the exceeded message that corresponds to the selected session. Thus, Helfman too fails to explicitly teach “upon reaching ... displaying a second symbol to indicate that the numbers of messages are above the threshold.”

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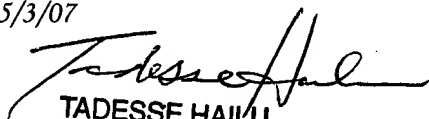
Conclusion

6. Thus, the prior art of records neither renders obvious nor anticipates the combination of claimed elements in light of the specification. Therefore, all the pending claims 1-6, 9-19, 22, and 24-27 are allowed. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

7. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the patent application information retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published application may be obtained from either Private-PAIR or Public-PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private-PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, please see pair-direct.uspto.gov web site. Should you have questions regarding access to the PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Tadesse Hailu, whose telephone number is (571) 272-4051. The Examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 10:30 – 7:00 ET. If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, John Cabeca, can be reached at (571) 272-4048 Art Unit 2173.

Examiner Tadesse Hailu
Art Unit 2173 – Operator Interface
5/3/07


TADESSE HAILU
PRIMARY EXAMINER